

East Greenwich School Committee

Minutes of the Budget Workshop/Strategic Planning Workshop

Thursday, January 30, 2014

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:35p.m. Budget Workshop

I. Call to order

Mr. Green called the meeting to order at 6:35p.m. School Committee members in attendance were: Dr. Deidre Gifford, Vice-Chair (arrived at 6:47p.m.); Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Ms. Carolyn Mark, Mr. Clark Smith, and Mrs. Susan Records (arrived at 6:38p.m). Mr. Jack Sommer was absent. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration; Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Student Services; Mrs. Tammy Walsh, Senior Accountant; Mr. Michael Podraza, EGHS Principal; Mrs. Alexis Meyer, Cole Principal; Mr. Dom Giusti, Eldredge Principal; Mrs. Beth Cauley; Hanaford Principal; Mrs. Cheryl Vaughn, Frenchtown Principal; and Mr. Neil Marcaccio, Meadowbrook Principal were also present.

II. Budget Workshop: Elementary and Secondary

Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Crawford thanked members of the finance office, administration office, and the budget owners for their time and effort in preparing the FY2015 budget. The proposed budget is a 3.4% increase, which is \$1,192,606.

Mrs. Records arrived at 6:38p.m.

Mrs. Crawford gave a summary of the overall budget noting the transportation contract expires on August 31, 2014. Specifications went out today and there may be four vendors competing for the bid. Health care was budgeted with a 5% increase, while dental is budgeted for a 5% decrease.

Dr. Gifford arrived at 6:47p.m.

Staffing reductions were discussed, along with the addition of one staff member in the technology department to assist with 1:1 implementation. Salaries are increasing \$223,702. This includes contractual increases for paraprofessionals, custodians, and step increases for teachers. The district expects a 9% increase in state aid. With a 3.4% overall budget increase; the proposed increase to taxpayers is 3.1%.

Mrs. Cauley and Mr. Giusti gave an overview of their budgets noting they tried to level fund them. Both are anticipating full capacity in their buildings and have budgeted accordingly. Mrs. Cauley and Mr. Giusti explained the need for technology replacement and additional computers for PARCC testing. The transition in Math from books to paper was discussed. It was noted additional education and communication might be helpful for parents to explain the changes

in Math.

Mr. Marcaccio and Mrs. Vaughn summarized their budgets noting the increase for professional development, which includes special education staff. No additional staff is budgeted for either school.

Mrs. Meyer gave an overview of the Cole budget, which is level-funded with no significant changes. A .4FTE Technology position at Cole will be eliminated. Mrs. Meyer explained the rationale and noted this does not eliminate choices for students. Copying costs have increased. Enrollment at Cole has continued to increase. There are usually 20-30 new students enrolled over the summer. The breaking point for enrollment is approximately 30 students per team. Budget lines were increased in mileage for staff (itinerants) and for equipment (music repairs).

Mr. Podraza summarized his budget noting there is a 9.2% decrease in discretionary spending. The EGHS total budget increase is 3.7%. Mr. Podraza explained the discretionary items that will be replaced with Chrome Books (i.e., Student Handbook, Acceptable Use Policy, Program of Studies). 80% of copier use is used for scanning and emailing. Laptops are needed for guidance counselors to make their positions mobile as they now travel to advisory classrooms. Mr. Green questioned the school's ability to transmit transcripts and asked if the issue is resolved. Mr. Podraza said they are currently able to run transcripts as PDFs. Mr. Green asked Mr. Podraza to

research the technology needed to digitize transcripts for colleges. Mr. Podraza was asked to report back with his findings.

Dr. Gifford would like an opportunity to revisit all budgets. She would also welcome Mrs. Fischer's (Finance Committee) input. Mr. Green said additional budget meetings might be necessary.

Mrs. Crawford asked all budget owners and School Committee members to contact her with any questions. Mr. Green said the Committee might need a global conversation with administrators and possibly the Finance Committee. Budget owners left the meeting at 8:23p.m.

III. Strategic Planning Workshop

Dr. Mercurio summarized the S.W.O.T. analysis completed by the ad-hoc committee (pages 3-5 of the handout) and then analyzed by district leadership (page 7). Mr. Green asked members to review page 7 and make notes/judgments on the items and list any item missing. All work completed by the ad-hoc committee will come back to the School Committee. Ms. Mark asked if district administrators could be available for input if necessary. After discussion, it was decided the next strategic planning workshop would take place on February 6, 2014 at 6:00p.m.

IV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Mark, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn at 8:49 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO
SECRETARY